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STATE VFW MEMBERS TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON, D.C. TO MEET WITH LEGISLATORS

Kevin Conklin, a member of the Decatur VFW, and Veterans of Foreign Wars National Council member representing the State of Michigan, traveled to Washington, D.C., Feb. 28 through March 6 to meet with legislators concerning veterans' issues and benefits. Conklin said these efforts are what contributed to the PACT Act being signed. The PACT Act is a law that expands VA health care and benefits for veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances. Conklin is shown at far right, with Congressman Bill Huizenga, second from right. Shown at far left is Larry Thayer, Jr., Vice Commander and Reinhold Yanka, second from left, Senior Vice Commander of Department of Michigan VFW.

Hartford area woman in custody following fatal shooting

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

HARTFORD - A 41-year-old Hartford area man is dead following an early Monday morning, March 24, shooting in Hartford, according to a press release from the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office.

Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott said Sheriff's deputies responded at 1:16 a.m., to a fight in progress at 400 S. Mary Street, in the City of Hartford, with shots fired. Upon arrival, deputies found an unresponsive male. Life saving measures were taken, but he succumbed to his injuries.

Deputies requested the assistance of the Criminal Investigation Division, (CID), to assist with the investigation. The case remains open and ongoing, according to Sheriff Abbott.

Sheriff Abbott emphasized that there are no safety concerns for the public. The sus-pect, a 41-year-old Hartford area woman, is currently in custody and is being cooperative with the investigation. She is currently awaiting arraignment.

Sheriff Abbott said more information will be released as the case develops.

Assisting the sheriff's office at the scene were Van Buren Emergency Medical Ser-vices (VBEMS) and Van Buren County CID.

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Garage and car destroyed in Paw Paw blaze

The Paw Paw Fire Department responded Monday afternoon, March 24, to a garage and car fire at 48255 45th St., Paw Paw. A total of 23 fire department members responded to the fire which was reported at approximately 3:06 p.m. Arriving at the scene, the unattached garage, approximately 20 x 30, was fully involved. A car, located near the garage, was also destroyed in the fire. A residence, approximately 20 feet away from the blaze, received heat damage to the siding. Paw Paw Fire Chief Kyle Richardson said the fire department remained at the scene for 90 minutes. Paw Paw was also assisted by Lawrence Township Emergency Services with a tanker as well as Van Buren Emergency Medical Services (VBEMS). The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

Second trial to begin in 2007 Lawrence murder case

A Lawrence woman convicted of murdering her husband will soon begin the process of having a second murder trial.

On Tuesday a jury trial was set to commence years after the January 2007 murder case of Todd Stermer.

According to investigators, Todd Stermer was beaten, set on fire alongside his family home and then ran over with a van driven by his wife, Linda Stermer.

Linda Stermer was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole in January 2010. She was released from prison eight years later in December 2018 after a federal judge granted her release on a $10,000 bond.

There was also a conditional writ of habeas corpus, a legal order that requires law officials to jus-tify detention.

It came after the court determined Linda's rights were violated when her then attorney, now current Kalamazoo County Prosecutor Jeff Getting, failed to effectively challenge key evidence among other issues in the trial.

According to a U.S. court of appeals document, Todd and Linda's 14-year marriage contained accusations of abuse and an affair.

It also detailed injuries Todd sustained during the time of his death that could not be directly linked to Linda and noted Todd's autopsy found in part "the cause of death to be a combination of burns and smoke inhalation."

In addition, the document stated "blunt-force injuries to Todd's head but could not say if these injuries were caused by him being struck by an object multiple times, being struck by a vehicle, or both."

A forensic pathologist added Todd Stermer died from four lacerations to his scalp. along with two rib fractures.

According to investigators, Todd's sweatpants, socks, and underwear tested positive for gasoline, leading detectives to the conclusion that the house fire was intentionally set in the living room.

Stermer's story was featured on "48 Hours" in 2020.

First-ever nuclear power recommissioning project – risks & rewards topic at Speaker Series

Dr. Max Vanatta

Small modular reactors (SMRs) have the potential to help companies and the country meet their emissions goals while satisfying growing energy demands, according to a study authored by Dr. Max Vanatta, doctoral graduate from the University of Michigan's School for Environment and Sustainability.

Vanatta will kick off the South Haven Speakers Series 11th season, "Nuclear Power - Risks and Rewards", April 10 at 7:00 PM at Lake Michigan College's South Haven Campus

His doctoral dissertation states that the US has not yet deployed its first SMR due to high costs and complexity. However, new research from the University of Michigan suggests that SMRs could become economically viable by 2050.

According to board member Dick Brunvand, "the selection of this topic is especially timely since the Palisades nuclear plant is set to become the first facility in the nation to be recommissioned and develop a SMR facility on site."

"Vanatta's study caught the series board attention as it explores various energy sources—including nuclear, wind, solar, and gas—as part of a sustainable power future", he said.

During his presentation Vanatta will give a brief history of the conventional Palisades power plant which opened in 1971 to produce 800 megawatts of electricity. He will discuss how these plants generate electrical power and why there have been catastrophic failures. He will examine energy needs and new alternatives to fossil fuels for AI and other high-energy demands. He will look closely at the safety factors of all nuclear sources of power generation with special attention to the nuclear waste issue.

After Palisades closed in 2022, 204 fuel rod assemblies were removed from the nuclear reactor and placed into the plant's spent fuel pool, an underwater storage facility that keeps the radioactive material cool.

A major focus of Vanatta's research and this presentation are small modular reactors, (SMRs). "While expensive and challenging, SMRs do have the potential to be deployed," he said.

Despite some clear bipartisan appetite to develop nuclear energy at the Michigan state level, it is difficult to predict the direction of regulations and funding nationally with a new presidential administration in Washington.

A week after taking over Palisades in 2022, Holtec surprised everyone by announcing plans to restart the plant.

Some neighbors are worried about radiation leaks and nuclear waste storage, while an industry engineer argues that the aging Palisades plant cannot meet current safety standards and should remain closed.

According to a recent Wall Street Journal article, "there is a revived understanding of nuclear energy as green power that could add to renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and hydropower. Nuclear-produced electricity is also seen as more consistent than wind or solar."

The WSJ article continues "some say reviving decommissioned plants is a faster and less expensive way to add to energy capacity. Building a new plant could take more than a decade, while the Palisades reopening is targeted for October 2025."

Holtec International, based in Florida, owns the plant and has only experience in decommissioning nuclear reactors. Restarting and operating Palisades would be their first attempt, so they plan to outsource some operations to a more experienced nuclear company.

According to Daywi Cook, Covert township supervisor, they lost $1.6 million in tax revenue when the plant closed in 2022. Cook said the township is now preparing for a boom in employment, housing and small businesses.

Holtec has discussed building two 300-megawatt small modular reactors at the Palisades site, but the company hasn't formally applied for a SMR license yet.

Series president Elaine Stephens highlighted the discussion's importance, noting, "This topic is enriched by Dr. Venetta's extensive research on energy needs and sources. He will offer new insights into the future of nuclear power and its role in our energy landscape."

Join us at 6:30 p.m. for a wine and cheese reception. Admission is $10 and students attend free of charge.

The South Haven Speakers Series is a 501c3 non-profit organization. Approximately three-quarters of the Series budget comes from generous donors. Further information can be found at the Series website Southhavenspeakers series.org.

Special-Lite receives state funding for expansion

On Thursday, March 20, Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced three business expansion projects receiving Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) support that will help create 129 new jobs and result in over $23 million in total capital investment in Van Buren, Shiawassee and Kalamazoo counties.

"Today's announcements further advance the state's design and manufacturing leadership by adding 129 new jobs and driving more than $23 million of investment in critical manufacturing industries across the state," said Governor Whitmer. "I'm proud to see these three companies bet on Michigan's world class workers. Michigan is open for business and on the move, and I will work with anyone to create jobs, bring supply chains home, and help companies like these continue to succeed."

Special-Lite, which manufactures commercial doors and entrances in the Village of Decatur, is constructing a new facility to expand its production capability. Acculevel, a foundation repair and waterproofing solutions provider, is establishing its regional headquarters in Durand. Finally, appliance manufacturer Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet is expanding its Kalamazoo facility to continue its growth as a leader in the outdoor kitchen systems space.

"I'm thrilled to welcome Acculevel to Shiawassee County, where their investment in Durand will not only drive economic growth but also create well-paying jobs that strengthen our local workforce," said state Senator Sam Singh (D-East Lansing). "Strategic investments like this don't just boost local economies — they create lasting opportunities for families and businesses alike. I'm also grateful to the City of Durand for its leadership and commitment to making this project a reality."

Special-Lite Inc. - manufactures engineered architectural products, including commercial fiberglass and aluminum complete entrance systems, interior aluminum framing with swing or sliding aluminum framed doors, and fiber reinforced polymer bathroom partitions. Located in Decatur, the company currently has 184 employees with an additional site in Benton Harbor employing 74 Michiganders.

The company is announcing they are expanding their production capability by constructing a new 59,000 square-foot building with the goal of increasing production capacity to support growth in the healthcare industry and others through new product launches. Over the next five years, the expansion is expected to generate $15,652,000 in capital investment with the creation of at least 55 new jobs in the region. This expansion has received support from the MSF in the amount of $250,000 through a Michigan Business Development Program (MBDP) grant.

"We are proud to continue investing in our community and the great state of Michigan. With the support of the MEDC we will enhance our commitment to manufacturing high quality products while strengthening and contributing to the local economy," said Alex Esposito, President and COO of Special-Lite, Inc. "This investment opens additional markets, supports new growth and enhances our presence as a premium employer in Southwest Michigan," he added.

In addition to MSF support, the Village of Decatur anticipates approval of a real property tax abatement with an anticipated value of more than $1.5 million. The company is looking at competing, existing sites in Indiana that would require less capital investment than building a new site in Decatur. Without state support, the company would have relocated to Indiana resulting in a net loss of good-paying jobs in Michigan.

"Business expansion projects require strong company leadership, outstanding municipal partners like the Village of Decatur, and support from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation," said Zach Morris, Executive Director of Market One, the economic development organization for Cass and Van Buren counties. "Thankfully, we had all three pieces in place and get to celebrate the remarkable growth of Special-Lite."

"This expansion is a major win for Decatur and Southwest Michigan," said state Representative Pauline Wendzel (R-Watervliet). "Special-Lite's decision to grow right here in our beautiful corner of the state underscores the strength of our local workforce and the value of investing in Michigan. I look forward to the new jobs and opportunities coming to Southwest Michigan."

Celebrating 50 Years of Marriage

Fred and Sue Martin

of Paw Paw, MI, will joyfully celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on April 5, 2025. They were married at the First Presbyterian Church in Paw Paw.

Fred and Sue's journey together has been marked by unwavering love and dedication. They are blessed with two wonderful daughters, Holly and Carrie, who have always admired their parents' commitment to each other and their family. Along with their sons-in-law, Will Plankenhorn and Nathan Willard, and grandsons, Justin Plankenhorn and Connor Willard, they have created a close-knit family filled with love and cherished memories.

Fred and Sue's love story is an inspiration to all who know them. Here's to many more years of happiness and love!

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2ND FRONT PAGE

Uncooperative driver in Antwerp Township involved in 'suspicious situation'

Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response was dispatched to an area in Antwerp Township for a suspicious situation. Deputies located the female driver who was driving around yelling for a male subject out of the car. She was also going to doors and knocking trying to locate the male. She was not cooperative with deputies, but they were able to eventually ID her. She had warrants out of Kalamazoo County, no driver's license, no plate on the vehicle, and no car insurance. She was lodged for the incident.

Uniform Response was dispatched to an assault in Paw Paw Township. The suspect fled prior to deputies' arrival on foot. While looking for the suspect on foot, deputies located a stolen vehicle on the property. Deputies then obtained a search warrant and searched for the residence. Deputies seized eight long guns, one handgun, couple hundred rounds of ammunition, and methamphetamine. "The owner of the property and suspect are prohibited from being in possession of firearms and ammunition," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott. The report was sent over to the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office for review and charges.

The 2025 Seasonal Weight Restrictions were lifted for Van Buren County on Wednesday, March 19, at 6 a.m.

Uniform Response took a UDAA (unlawful driving away automobile) in Geneva Township. An unknown suspect stole a black hard top Jeep Wrangler that was setting unoccupied in a driveway. The Jeep was later located in Allegan County. "Anyone with any information is asked to call our office," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response was dispatched to an 87-year-old with dementia who walked away from a residence and couldn't be located by the family in Bloomingdale Township. While searching the area with numerous resources, the resident was located safely.

"A detective from our CID Unit was in Hartford when a call came out about a fire at a construction site that was suspicious. The detective worked the call and found that juveniles set some material on fire. The detective was able to get confessions for the incident," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response took a runaway complaint in Hartford Township. "The juvenile was later reunited with his parents on his own in Illinois safe and sound," said Sheriff Abbott.

"Our Narcotic Unit conducted a methamphetamine sales and possession investigation in Antwerp Township. They executed a search warrant at the residence and recovered methamphetamine and a handgun (which the suspect could not be in possession of). The suspect was lodged on several felonies," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a domestic violence that was taking place in a vehicle traveling down a road in Lawrence Township. After deputies investigated the incident, the driver/male half was arrested and lodged for operating under the influence of alcohol and domestic violence.

"We are doing free adoptions at Animal Control March 24-29. "Long story short, we need to empty our shelter due to all the flooring and kennels being stripped out so new concrete can be poured. If you are needing a companion for a forever home, please head out to the shelter and find your new four-legged baby," said Sheriff Abbott.

Van Buren Tech students qualify for national conference

Seventeen students from the Business Management, Cyber Security & Computer Network Technology, and Software Engineering programs at Van Buren Tech, Lawrence, participated in the Business Professionals of America (BPA) State Leadership Conference, held March 13-16, at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids. Seven students, shown above, qualified to compete at the BPA National Leadership Conference, May 7 -11, at Gaylord Palms Resort, Kissimmee, FL. The seven include: Brayden Ackerman, Rene Barrientos, and Eric Blocker, all of Hartford High School, Joseph Caprathe, and Connor Daiga, Mattawan High School, Josefina Medellin, Lawrence High School, and Shane Whittker, Paw Paw High School.
Photo courtesy/ Van Buren Tech

Seventeen students from the Business Management, Cyber Security & Computer Network Technology, and Software Engineering programs at Van Buren Tech, Lawrence, par-ticipated in the Business Professionals of America (BPA) State Leadership Conference, held March 13-16, at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids.

Seven students qualified to compete at the BPA National Leadership Conference, May 7 -11, at Gaylord Palms Resort, Kissimmee, FL.

The following Van Buren Tech students earned a total of 13 awards:

Brayden Ackerman, Hartford High School
Sixth Place - Advanced Spreadsheet Applications
Rene Barrientos, Hartford High School
Second Place C# Programming
Second Place Information Technology Concepts
Seventh Place Computer Programming Concepts
Eric Blocker, Hartford High School
First Place Network Administration using Cisco
Second Place Computer Network Technology
Joseph Caprathe, Mattawan High School
First Place C# Programming
Sixth Place Computer Programming Concepts
Connor Daiga, Mattawan High School
Seventh Place Java Programming
Josefina Medellin, Lawrence High School
Sixth Place Network administration using Cisco
Sixth Place Server Administration using Microsoft
Shane Whittker, Paw Paw High School
Sixth Place Computer Security
Sixth Place Linux Operating System Fundamentals

Van Buren Tech Instructors and BPA Advisors include: Andrew Barnes, Cyber Securi-ty & Computer Network Technology, Dr. John M. Hinckley, Software Engineering,Steve Rowekamp - Ambs, Integrated English, and Denis Huffman, Advisor Emeritus.

CONCERT TO BENEFIT CROP SET FOR MARCH 30

Vineyard Chicks

Jean Watson and Vineyard Chicks will appear in a benefit concert for Van Buren County CROP Hunger Walk, Sunday, March 30, at 3 p.m.at the Paw Paw United Methodist Church.

Jean Watson

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Mattawan No Limits team participates in basketball on Pistons court

By Roxine Kemp

Mattawan was one of six Michigan high school's, and the only local high school, to participate in the Unified Basketball Games at Little Caesars Arena, home of the Detroit Pistons and Red Wings, on Saturday, March 15.

According to Cecelia Davis, special education and Thrive Program teacher, and coordinator of the Peer to Peer Program at Mattawan High School, Pistons representatives first contacted Mattawan in the summer of 2024.

"They had seen pictures of our kids playing in the No Limits basketball games, she explained," and reached out to Malia Phelps (Special Education Director) and Kris Simms (MHS Principal to see if we were interested in playing in the Unified Games. "

It was not a hard decision to make since Mattawan already has an annual No Limits basketball game (since 2021), consisting of several special needs students and their student peer leaders. The sports program has grown steadily since its inception four years ago, with David and para professional Angie Reiter serving as coaches. The following year, middle school teachers, Robert King and Phu Trieu, joined the No Limits coaching staff.

With administration all in agreement to take part in the Detroit event, Simms sent in the required $100 down commitment payment to the Pistons and preparation began.

"I knew the kids would be so excited to go to Little Caesars Arena," said Davis. "I just remember when I was in high school, I got to play ice hockey at the Coliseum between two periods of the game. It was so much fun, I knew our kids would love the same experience!"

However, the decision was made to NOT tell the students until they got settled in for the start of the school year, but the secret was hard to keep.

When Mattawan High School junior and peer leader, Jack Reiter, first heard the news, he said he was definitely shocked.

"It was pretty sweet," he said. "It's so cool the kids got to play on the Pistons court!"

Another peer leader, Marcel Stork, also a MHS junior, was also in awe at getting to play on the Pistons court.

"It was very surreal," he said. "Everything from our Pistons No Limits swag to the locker rooms made the whole experience feel very VIP. I made memories to last a lifetime. "

Andy Myers, Group Sales Executive for the Detroit Pistons, helped organize the event, including securing tickets for Mattawan parents and fans. He said this is the fourth year the Detroit Pistons have hosted the Unified Showcase games, and then, allowed those players and fans to stay to watch the Pistons play professional basketball.

Stork and Jack Reiter were two of 19 Mattawan High School students to have the honor of playing on the Pistons court. The Mattawan team were also fortunate enough to have Kirt Brown, MHS history teacher and voice of the Wildcats at all home basketball and football games, also announce the Unified Game.

At the game, each player was given a Detroit Pistons knit beanie hat, a Cade Cunningham bobble head, and $20 toward lunch.

From the 78 tickets sold to Mattawan players and fans, MHS received $5 for each. Davis plans to use the money to purchase a handicap-accessible basketball hoop since there is one student who is in a wheelchair and plays on the No Limits team. In the future, as the program grows, the lower hoop will make it possible for more students in wheelchairs to participate.

Stork's favorite part of the Detroit experience was watching the excitement and joy of his team mates, and "seeing the practice pay off on the big stage. Seeing everyone's support for each other, and getting to stay to watch the Pistons game with my teammates later, capped off a very special day."

Para pro and coach, Angie Reiter, echoed Stork's sentiments." Cecelia and I were certainly blessed to be able to share this experience with the kids," she said."My heart melted every time one of the kids made a basket. The excitement from them made the experience that much better! "

Those who were unable to travel to Detroit to watch the Unified Basketball Games, will have a chance to cheer on Mattawan's No Limits basketball team at their annual game at 6 pm on May 16 in the MHS gym.

Senior Services gala deemed a success

By James Windell

Almost 200 people enjoyed an evening out on Saturday, March 15, 2025, when Senior Services of Van Buren County hosted their third annual Gala.

The fundraising event featured dinner, both a live auction and a silent auction, a raffle and dancing with music provided by Moondog DJ Rob Byrd.

Senior Services Executive Director Diane Rigozzi had set a goal of raising $50,000 while at the same time celebrating the third anniversary of its South Haven Senior Center. Although the event raised less than expected, Rigozzi was still happy with the outcome.

"We consider it a success," Rigozzi said. "It doesn't matter how much we actually raise because of the energy that was here. It's not really just about the numbers for us. It's more about the awareness that this event brings to the community."

The highlight for many who attended was the live auction with Bob Lindsey, who volunteers his services each year. With 24 items up for auction, the live bidding was exciting and sometimes very competitive as participants generously bid on such things as wooden ramps for seniors' houses, a week at a log cabin on a lake, and gift certificates from local businesses.

Senior Services of Van Buren County, founded in 1995, provides services, opportunities, and caring support to seniors to enhance their quality of life. As the only full-service, multi-location senior center in Van Buren County, the organization offers a wide range of activities and services for upwards of 170,000 visits from local seniors each year.

Rigozzi said that tickets sales, the raffle and the two auctions combined brought in over $36,000. The money raised will go toward the mortgage on the South Haven building.

"When we do any specific fundraiser," Rigozzi said, "it always goes towards the building. We try very hard not to use millage dollars to pay for this building and so far we have been able to do that. Our millage dollars go directly back to the seniors."

Although the Senior Services building is paid for, a mortgage remains on the initial $3.5 million in renovations. "We've paid off about $2.1 million, so there's $1.4 million we still owe. That's after three years, so I feel good about that," Rigozzi said.

American Legion to commemorate Vietnam vets

By James Windell

When the Vietnam War ended in 1975, more than three million men had been part of that ill-fated conflict.

Today, 50 years later, veterans of that war, many of whom still recall returning home to an unfriendly welcome, are now elderly and dying. In fact, 1,800 Vietnam Veterans die every day in this country.

That's why the American Legion Post #49 in South Haven along with co-host Corewell Health's "We Honor Veterans" program are putting on a Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans event on Saturday, March 29 at American Legion Post 49.

"We're inviting Vietnam era veterans, their families and the public from the South Haven area to attend so we can provide them with the welcome home that they never received when they came home during the Vietnam era," says Stephanie Kostizen, a social worker who runs the Veteran Support Services and We Honor Veterans at Hospice and Palliative Care for Corewell Health South.

Since the early part of 2011, Corewell Health Hospice and Palliative Care South has been a We Honor Veterans partner organization through the National Alliance for Care at Home, and currently holds a level five status.

"Meeting the unique needs of Veteran patients, paying tribute to those who have served, and advocating for the needs of our local Veterans, are all part of our continued commitment to our local Veterans and our community as a level five partner of the national We Honor Veterans program," Kostizen says. She emphasizes that they want to honor not just those stationed in Vietnam during the war, but other service personnel who carried out their military service during those years.

"We will give each one our Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Declaration along with the Vietnam Veterans beads," Kostizen says. "These beads are significant because each color of the beads signifies some aspect of their service. Since we are also a member of the Vietnam War Commemoration Program through the Department of Defense, we will also be giving out Vietnam War Commemoration lapel pins. All of this to thank them for their service."

The event will begin on March 29 at 12:00 pm at American Legion Post 49, 129 Michigan Ave., South Haven. with signing in and a light lunch that will be followed by the ceremony and the awarding of the declaration, the beads and lapel pins.

Vietnam era Veterans are requested to register by sending an email to: SouthHavenAmericanLegion@gmail.com or calling 269-637-6817

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Injury stymies Gobles wrestler's season

Nick Graves was a powerful heavyweight wrestler for Gobles in his career.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

CAWTON — Nick Graves is coming off an excellent senior season at 285 pounds for Gobles wrestling.

"Nick is an original member from when I took over the team and a solid contributor who was on the cusp of having his best year had his season cut short due to injury," coach Erin Carlin said.

Graves was not able to get to the state meet because of his injury but still had a terrific season.

"I beat a lot of kids I lost to last year," Graves said. "I was having a really good season until I got injured."

Graves hurt his foot badly and had surgery on it. "It was already broken," he said, adding the extent of the injury was not known until later.

Graves said he had only lost six matches at that time.

Without the injury "I definitely would have qualified for state," he said.

As a junior Graves made it to regionals.

"This would have been the farthest I made it this year but I just couldn't get it going," he said. "It was very upsetting.. But I was happy to be there for my team and for guys going to state. Two weeks after surgery, I tried to wrestle, I went out there and lost.

"I beat a couple of good opponents. My best opponent was a guy who beat me well lat year but I pinned him at the Comstock tournament."

The slide by and single leg were among Graves best moves

This was his fifth year of wrestling.

"I will miss my team and miss my teammates," he said. "I will miss the coaching staff."

Doorlag enjoys banner season

Devin Doorlag had a 44-14 record this season.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

GOBLES — Devin Doorlag's season for Gobles wrestling team was a thing of beauty.

He was a junior, 126 pounds, 44-14, two All State and was sixth at state this season.

"He is a complete wrestler from top, bottom,

and neutral positions," coach Erin Carlin said. "He's very coachable and is captain. He did not compete at SAC conference due to injury."

As for getting sixth place at state, "I wish I would have gotten higher," Doorlag said.

But it's his highest placement at the state finals. He got eighth in 2024.

At the state meet, my first day I thought I wrestled pretty good," Doorlag said. "The second day I definitely could have wrestled better."

He said his first match at state was a good one. He also won some tournament tittles. He was in the finals of every tournament he was in except for at state.

Doorlag was a strong all-around wrestler. For next year "my goal is to be in finals," he said.

Doorlag plans to be a lot off season wrestler. He is also in football and baseball.

The baseball team "will be pretty good," said Doorlag, a second baseman, shortstop and pitcher.

He was a running back in football.

Bangor basketball team looks ahead

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Bangor basketball coach Rob Culbertson is looking forward to the future of his boys team.

He has coach two years at Bangor. The boys were 3-21 overall and 2-16 in the Southwest 10 Conference

"We are a young team and I increased the difficulty of our non conference schedule. A lot of young players gained valuable experience," Culbertson said. "I felt we did not meet expectations but a lot of young players gained varsity experience.

"I believe the best performance was beating Decatur 60-32 in Districts," Culbertson said. "Carson Pullins made six threes and scored 24 points in this game. An individual season highlight was Jonah Luter scored a career high 31 points vs Decatur during the regular season.

This was a challenging season but we continued to compete and ended up winning a district game vs Decatur 60-32."

Jonah Luter earned second Team Southwewst 10 All Conference.

"Jonah is a 5-foot-9 inch sophomore shooting guard in the graduating class of 2027. He made a total of 53 threes this season, Culbertson said. "He averaged 14.5 points, 3.8 rebounds, 2.3 assists, 2.4 deflections, and 1.6 steals. He handled point guard duties while my starting point guard was injured and still ended up with the lowest turnover percentage on our team.

"We graduated one starter Julian Pullins. We return three Southwest 10 all-conference players. All three will be juniors next year (Jonah Luter, Carson Pullins, and Jaret McCoy). Jonah was second team All Conference. Carson and Jaret received Honorable Mention."

Culbertson added:

Next year looks like a team that gained a lot of valuable experience from the previous season. The majority of our key players will be Juniors next season. A lot of talented seniors graduated from the SW10 Conference this season.

South Haven edges Three Rivers

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — The weather was good enough on March 21 for South Haven to start off its baseball season with a 2-1 victory over Three Rivers.

A scheduled second game was not played.

In the first game, the Rms had two hits and one error, Three Rivers had five hits and two errors.

South Haven scored two runs in the bottom of the fifth. Three Rivers had two runs in the top of the seventh but it was not enough to overtake South Haven.

The Rams had hits from J. Bevenino who also had two RBIs to win the game for the hosts.

J. Schneider had the other hit for South Haven.

M. Versepuit and Charles Morse were South Haven's pitchers. Verseput went five inningss and allowed no runs and two hits. He struck out seven and walked none. Morse went two innings and allowed one run on three hits and struck out two.

South Haven was scheduled to be home on March 25 with Hartford. The next games are set to be at Schoolcraft on April 8, at home with Bridgman on April 10 at home with Allegan on April 15 and at Coloma on April 22.

Lawton track teams expect to be strong again

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWTON —Mike Meyer is head coach for a Lawton track and field program that expects to be strong again.

Both teams last year were 4-1 in conference meets and finished second in the SAC.

Girls team was third at regionals. Four girls qualified for state finals in two different events. The boys team won regionals second year in a row and seven

boys qualified for state finals in five events.

Mason Mayne was state champion in discus and state runner-up

in shot put. He is returning for his senior year this year.

Graduates included Heidi Newhouse (now running for Grand Valley State University), high jumper and sprinter.

"Great athlete and even better person. Will definitely miss her

personality, leadership, and work ethic," Meyer said.

Lexi Girolami is playing volleyball for Heidelberg University. She was a high jumper and hurdler

"She was a great athlete and even better person. We will definitely miss her

personality, leadership, and work ethic.

Kylee Somers was a thrower.

"She is a great athlete and even better person," Meyer said. "We will definitely miss her personality, leadership, and work ethic. Addi Price was a sprinter.

"Great athlete and even better person," Meyer said. "We will definitely miss her personality, leadership, and work ethic."

Key graduates for boys were Jason Barnett and Valentin Portillo as throwers;

Andrew Van Tuyl and Zach Kooyers as pole vaulters and Kal Motter and Aiden O'Brien as sprinters.

Top athletes for this year's team:

Girls team: Megan Robertson (senior, pole vaulter and sprinter, captain); Alyssa McNally (Senior, pole vaulter and sprinter, captain); Gabby Holloway (Senior, hurdler and high jumper, captain).

Boys Team:

Mason Mayne (Senior, thrower, captain, returning state champion); Hayden Merriman (senior, sprinter); Greyson Burrous junior, sprinter, Jack Fletcher Junior, sprinter.

Strengths for the girls team will be pole vault, hurdles and sprints.

"We are a young team so just getting some big meet experience," Meyer said. "Our league is one of the toughest track conferences around with many great D3 and D4 schools. Schoolcraft, Kalamazoo Hackett, Kalamazoo Christian,

Constantine, Saugatuck, and Bridgman are always tough every year.

"If both of our teams can stay healthy, we hopefully will land towards the top."

Mattawan senior defenseman reflects on his career

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Mattawan's hockey team had many outstanding players duriing the 2024-2025 season including Carson Mattern, a senior defenseman,

He and his stepbrother Dominic Vezeau played three years together on the same team including this season.

"We have some similarities," Mattern said. "We both move the puck fairly well. As for differences, obviously it's that he's at forward and I'm on defense."

Mattern said he moved to defense a few years ago.

"I like it," he said. "You always have to have your head up and you've got to know what's going on the ice."

As a defenseman, "we're tight and it shows up on the ice," Mattern said. "We don't have any problems in the lockerroom. Everyone likes hanging out with each other."

Mattawan went to the state quarterfinal Mattern's sophomore year. But this season, they were eliminated in the first round,

Mattern will be playing lacrosse this spring but says hockey's his favorite sport. He acknowledged many players on the team are hockey-lacrosse dual sport athletes and there are similarities in the sport.ddvvm

South Haven coach in her 36th season

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Wilma Wilson South Haven

Varsity softball head coach, and in year 36 of varsity softball coaching and 38th overall.

Last season, South Haven was SAC champions and had a 23-13 overall record.

South Haven lost five seniors including all conference twins Kamryn and Taylor Holland, Kayley Gorham, Myraql McGee and Sam Beeney. They were all huge contributors.

Key players this year with only five returners are senior pitcher Molly Verseput, senior catcher/3b Madi Dotson,

senior shortstop Grace Strebeck, junior pitcher outfielder

Addi DeKoning and junior outfielder Erin Bos.

"We hope to see leadership and big contributions from

them," Wilson said. "We have a nice group of younger

players to fill out our team. We always have hopes of

winning the conference and going as far as possible in the

state tournament showing improvement as we go through

the season.

"We feel our team strength is depth in pitching/catching

and good team speed. We are young (five freshman and

sophomores) with only five returners so we will be working

on getting comfortable together as a team and learning

learning learning."

Wilson said the conference will be headed up by challenges

from Coloma, Watervliet and Bridgman.

"We are excited for another opportunity to work with some

great gals and coaches," Wilson said.

Paw Paw baseball off to 2-2 start

By John Raffel
Corrrespondent

The Paw Paw varsity baseball team opened the season on March 19 against a tough squad from Hackett who is ranked fifth in Division 4. The Red Wolves dropped game 1 10-0

"Cold bats and a few costly errors led to the defeat," Paw Paw coach Derek Vanderburg said. "Caden Bowen picked up the lone hit. Andrew Lehto and Maverick Johnson battled on the mound.

"In game 2 it was a back and forth game but the Irish prevailed 11-8. Leading the hitting attack was Andrew and Maverick. Andrew went 2-for-2 with a double, an RBI, and walk. Maverick went 2-for-2 with a double and three RBIs. Hayden Criger collected his first varsity hit, while freshman Gavin Allers was a wall behind the plate.'

Paw Paw played Friday at home against Hartford and the Red Wolves walked away with a twin bill sweep.

In Game 1, the Red Wolves won 8-7 in walk off style. Remi Dempsey pitched four strong innings, allowed two earned runs, and struck out four. Leading the hitting attack was Landon Buhl. Landon went 2-for-3 with a double, stolen base, and an RBI. Maverick Johnson picked up the only other hit and RBI. Ryan Holmes added 3 walks and 2 stolen bases. Hayden Criger added an RBI and BB.

In Game 2, the Red Wolves played a clean game defensively and mercied the Huskies 10-0.

"Landon was dominant on the mound and picked up the win by throwing a four-inning complete game, allowed one hit, and struck out seven," Vanderburg said. "Ryan, Andrew, and Caden led the offense. Ryan was 2-for-2 with an inside the park homed runs, 2 RBIs, and walk, and two stolen bases. Andrew was 1-for-2 with a deep triple, two RBIs, and a walk. Caden was 1-for-2 with a game ending two RBI double and a walk. Hayden and Carson DeYoung each added an RBI. Gavin Allers collected 2 RBIs and a walk."

Bangor baseball team expects to be tough

By John Raffel

BANGOR — Nick Cox is Bangor's baseball coach and hopes to have a strong season in the Southwest 10.

Last year Bangor was 7-25-2 and played in the district finals.

"Eloy Martinez was our leader, All-Conference honorable mention and all-district," Cox said. "Jaiden Horvath was also an All-Conference honorable mention and All-District. We also counted on Caleb Burrows, Anthony Hardester, Yrral Campbell, Thomas Smith, and Ethan Abbott/

"Julian Pullins (2025) is our one returning senior, he plays second base and some pitching. Juju will hit near the front of the order. We have high expectations of him to be a leader in the dugout. Terrance Payne (2026) will play third and pitch He will be a main pitcher for this program this year."

Jaxon Webb (2026) is Bangor's team captain who will lead the outfielder "as he will spend most of his time running around center field," Cox said. "He will also see time on the mound. Jaret McCoy (2027) is one of the captains that will play short, pitch, and hit 2-3 in the line-up. As a freshman Jaret got second team all-conference and was an All-District infielder. Jaret is expected to be at the top of all team's stats.

"We are a very young Varsity team this year losing six starters from last year but also returning young talent that produced when given time. We expect to continue to grow our win total this year as we have done for the past three seasons."

The pitching staff "will be a strong spot for us this season," Cox said. "We will have the most strike throws in my tenure here. We will also be deep in the

outfield this season with good speed and good arms. We will have to grow our IQ's as a team for the game of baseball."

As for the league, "the conference has been controlled by Decatur and Centreville as long as

it has been around," Cox said. "We are hopeful that we can compete for a spot in the top half of the conference.

"I took over the baseball after spring break in 2022 with 12 kids in the program. With the support of our athletic director Fred Smith the school and community we have grown every year. We now have 27 kids playing baseball for Bangor High School."

Players are:

Jaxon Webb 11 CF/P; Cason Pullins 10 OF/P; Julian Pullins 12 2nd/P; Brendon Jackson 11 C/3/P; Luke Remington 10 C/OF; Wyatt Schnieder 11 OF/P/; Isaiah Irvine 10 P/UTLY; Terrance Payne 11 P/3rd; Chalmers Davis 12 DH/OF; Deondra Hankins 11 1st; Jorge Dominguez 11 3/2/P; Peyton Cannon 11 OF; Zach Mann 11 OF/P; Christian Kovell 10 1

Nick Hardester 11 1st; Jaret McCoy 10 SS/P.

PET OF THE WEEK

POLLY POCKET

This adorable 30 pound girl is Polly Pocket and she is a sweetheart! She's good with other dogs and up to date on vaccines. She is a little shy at first, but loves treats and will warm up to you after some time.

Free adoptions all this week at the Van Buren County Sheriff's Animal Control Shelter. We need to have all the dogs adopted out before April 5, as the shelter will receive new flooring.

For more information about Polly Pocket or other animals at the shelter, contact: Lindsay Downey, Kennel Director,
58040 County Road 681, Hartford.
(269) 621-4624.
Website: www.vanburencountymi.gov or E-mail; DowneyL@vanburencountymi.gov

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VIEWPOINT

Destroying Tesla vehicles and dealerships makes no sense

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX
PUBLISHER

Maybe someone can explain to me why firebombing a Tesla dealership or a Tesla car makes sense.

Over the past week Tesla vehicles have been front and center in the resistance directed at President Trump and his DOGE leader. Elon Musk. Tesla cars have been firebombed. Keyed and the subject of Sharpie messages like NAZI written all over them.

I say if you want to protest Trump and Musk have at. They are attempting to put an end to the bureaucratic stranglehold they claim exists on our federal government. In so doing programs are being slashed and employees being fired.

However, I inquire about the relevance of this matter to the acts of violence directed towards Tesla. Tesla is a publicly traded automobile company that is owned by shareholders. Musk owns approximately 18 percent of those shares. The balance are owned by the big funds, Blackrock, Vanguard, etc. that invest for ordinary people like you and I.

Thus if you plan on bankrupting Tesla, like some lawmakers have pronounced, you aren't hurting Musk, in fact you are hurting small investors as well as the 100,000 plus employees that depend on their income from Tesla.

You won't hurt Musk because he owns several companies- Space X, Twitter, Neuralink and the Boring Company, just to name a few. We all know Space X has taken over space, launching rockets every other day and planning a Mars landing very soon. Neuralink aims at restoring autonomy to people with paralysis and potentially treating neurological disorders.

If Tesla is bankrupted, Musk will simply move on to another project. He will still be the richest man in the world. But the 100,000 employees will have nothing.

But back to Tesla. Those people that work for Tesla or are shareholders in the company have absolutely nothing to do with Trump or DOGE. Many of them agree with you politically. So again, why try to destroy them?

But wait, maybe the opposite is happening. I'm reading reports that more Tesla vehicles are being ordered than ever before. Once the darling of climate activists (Teslas are electric and don't pollute the air) are now being purchased by conservatives who swore they would never ditch their gas guzzlers.

My ownership of two Teslas was well-documented in columns a few years back. They are terrific cars for short distances, but my trips to Florida and back to Michigan were a nightmare because you have to stop every 180 miles to charge. I didn't buy them because I was promoting a "green agenda." I bought mine because they were relatively new at the time and I liked the novelty aspect. Now you see them as much as a Chevrolet on the road.

But I digress. As I keep stating don't blame a sheet of metal for what is happening in government. Rather, direct your blame to those who are implementing the policies you don't like. Peaceful protests are an American right, and I strongly encourage them, but firebombing and destroying property is bad behavior that might lead to a lengthy jail sentence.

Life as Performance Art

G CORWIN STOPPEL

I sometimes glance at marquees outside churches. Some list worship hours and their cleric's name; others have a pithy little maxim to amuse the motorists. One wished Noah had swatted the two mosquitoes who got about ark.

A quarter-mile down the road and I no longer remember most of them. But one from a church down the street — Aspire to Inspire Before You Expire — proved impossible to forget.

A good place to start is remembering names of a few people who inspired us. I doubt any set out one morning to provide others long-term inspiration. to others. They did not plot a course of action. They just did it, and we benefited from it.

Of all the teachers and clergy we've met in our lives, maybe only a few stood out. Same with others we've encountered.

From there we move on to biographies we have read. Again, some inspire and challenge us; others, not so much.

Forget the pouting and photoshopping social media "influencers" who are on a quest for approval from others while making money. They have an attitude that reeks of, "Look at me! If you'd just apply yourself, you can come closer to being as cool as me!" No thanks.

The inspirers who truly matter turn up in odd moments and places in our lives and inspire us to become better people.

I remember asking a tour guide in Halifax, Nova Scotia a few years back what her secret was to being perpetually enthusiastic.

"Some days," she said, "when I'm out of sorts, hungry or my feet hurt, I have remind myself that the folks like you who get on the bus are here on vacation.

"Maybe they saved for it for years; maybe they know it's their last vacation. My job is to give them the best two hours of sight-seeing I can manage."

I do not remember everything we saw that afternoon, but I do remember her wisdom and elegance.

While on duty, our guide took the focus off herself and put it on others. When I feel grumpty I remember examples like that and apply them. Patience and kindness inspire, being short-tempered doesn't.

The Netflix series "The Crown" is a semi-historical biography of Queen Elizabeth's decades of facing challenges. In one exchange, she as a young queen, she turns to her grandmother for advice. Never let yourself be owned by others, the old queen advises.

"A smile," she says, "a frown, a raised eyebrow and they will own you. Do nothing that shows surprise or weakness. Doing nothing is the hardest and most important job of all. That is how you inspire others. They want to be inspired and believe they can lead a better life."

That segment brought to mind the time I saw the real Queen Elizabeth when she came to St. Andrew's University in Scotland. A covey of dignitaries escorted her into a garden so she could inspect a tree planted hundreds of years earlier by Queen Mary of Scotland.

She did it with grace and dignity, but I wondered what was going through her mind. Was she truly interested in this tree, or did she think to herself, "Seriously? I came all the way up here from London to look at a tree so old and feeble its branches are propped up? Which one of my soon-to-be-former knaves put that on the agenda?"

Instead, she looked at the tree, spoke to someone standing near her, then turned and waved in our direction before she left.

It was another life-lesson. If the sovereign of the United Kingdom could look at an old tree and listen to someone drone on about its importance, maybe you and I can carry out the trash, hold open a door for another person, wave another motorist through an intersection and so on while being nice about it all the whole time.

A fellow writer from Minnesota just sent me a message that, while waiting at the boarding gate of an airline, he looked around and noticed that almost everyone was either listening to music on their device, or busy exercising their thumbs on it keyboard.

Not one of them looked up, no one was talking to anyone else, and he had better sense than to try to interrupt them. He added that old geezers like us who dare to do such a thing are sometimes rewarded with four-letter words or given the middle-finger wave.

No law demands they look up, much less talk with others. But the social contract — to which most of us give a glance and confirm is a good idea — is different. It's sad, because had they interacted with my friend, they would have discovered he has an interest in them.

The world is full of too much "me, myself and I" mentality while thinking how boring and awful everything and everyone else is. They don't want to open themselves up to the potential of being inspired so that, in turn, the day may come when they can inspire others.

We're better than that, and we know it. Go forth and Aspire to Inspire before you Expire.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Education system not working because of broken students

Dear Editor:

An 'Open Letter' to all local School Boards and School Leaders in Van Buren County.

With the current Administration working to close the Department of Education, it's a very challenging season to be a teacher. Only time will tell if this controversial decision hinders or helps our country's broken public school system (most teachers have great fear this will further eliminate already dwindling resources). Yet we must all concede that student reading and math proficiency have been on the decline for many years. Decisions made during the Pandemic didn't cause this trend but only worsened the decline. Therefore, a conversation on educational reform (or perhaps even a hard reset) is long past due.

This topic has been a passion of mine as a parent, pastor, community leader, reserve deputy, certified teacher, and up until very recently even a school bus driver. Because our local classroom teachers don't feel heard and are facing increasing hopelessness, what follows is an 'open letter' to all the local School Boards and School Leaders in Van Buren County.

Like most districts, if the mission of our Schools is to develop, support, challenge and inspire every child for life-long success, then we are really starting to fail in that mission. What we are currently doing to help students succeed doesn't seem to be working. Each year, we are witnessing a growing number of students who leave our schools, enter adulthood, but can't seem to function in our civil society. According to recent data, schools across our nation are failing to provide a growing number of students with even the most basic skills. (Nationwide, one in every three eighth graders are functionally illiterate. In Detroit, nearly two-thirds of eighth graders are "below basic" readers.)

But why is this happening?

Because more and more students are entering our school systems broken and completely unmotivated to learn. Recent evidence has shown that a lack of parental interactions/guidance, increased/prolonged screen usage, as well as drastic changes in our society have all resulted in more and more children coming into our schools physically, emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally delayed. High Schoolers now 'act like' middle school students did only 15 years ago. This phenomenon filters all the way down to kindergarten students who lack many of the basic life skills needed to succeed in a structured learning environment; a growing number of 5-year-olds behave more like toddlers.

As a result, each day our dedicated classroom teachers must decide to either meet their students' emotional/mental health needs or try to meet their academic needs. (They simply lack the time and energy to do both) Forced to choose academics (for that is their primary job), more and more students fall further behind current grade-level standards. Even when students clearly do NOT meet benchmarks and are NOT proficient in basic skills, they are often 'promoted' to the next grade level.

These problems then grow exponentially as the next teacher begins the school year with more and more students who arrive with numerous academic deficiencies and special needs. Eventually, as we have seen in recent lawsuits, students can even graduate from High School being functionally illiterate.

This proves that you can have the best trained and talented teachers, along with the best available resources, and STILL not succeed in teaching many of the students who currently attend our schools. It is now an impossible task! We continue to spend more and more per student yet continue to fall further behind other developed countries. (Depending on which data you look at, the U.S. is ranked third place in spending per student and yet ranked 15th in terms of the educational index of success.)

The other major issue plaguing our schools is student misbehavior. When younger students begin to realize they are quickly falling behind their classmates and are unable to succeed in a structured learning environment, they act out in increasingly disruptive ways. With the best of intentions (i.e. being a 'trauma informed' school), we are enabling students to behave in destructive and even violent ways.

When one student gets angry and begins to destroy a classroom, other students are then required to evacuate until help arrives. How much instructional time is being interrupted or lost because of what they just witnessed? Who pays for the classroom items being destroyed?

When physical assaults against fellow students, teachers, or staff are committed, those violent students are rarely reported to law enforcement (because that might embarrass the district) and are often given no real consequences to deter further behaviors. Eventually, these violent students get too big and strong to manage and then the police are finally called to deal with the situation. Just when these troubled students are about to face some lasting consequences, they abruptly switch schools and become someone else's problem. Finally, when these same out-of-control students are at home, calling 911 is the only solution many parents seem to have left.

So, what can be done to fix our broken public education system?

• As part of the required orientation each year, give age-appropriate parenting tips to everyone in attendance and implore parents to avoid allowing their children the use of tablets, smartphones, and social media which are now proven to cause irreversible harm to developing minds. (See the book 'Anxious Generation' by Jonathan Haidt)

• Implement a 'device-free schools' policy county-wide. No personal electronic devices should EVER be allowed during instructional hours. (They should all be kept in a locker)

• For students in a district that are prone to violence, take a MUCH firmer approach when they are destructive or causing harm to fellow students and staff. (Their families should pay for the damaged property.)

• Here in Michigan, when opening 'school of choice' slots, if a child that is out of district has some extreme/special needs (especially if that child is prone to violence), convey to that family we just don't have the resources to meet their child's needs.

• Petition our State Legislators to adjust Educational Benchmarks and Standards to better reflect the students who now attend our schools. Otherwise, our students will continue to be set up for failure.

• Petition our State Legislators to amend/revise Michigan Law 380.1307c that prohibits educators from restraining students who are committing acts of destruction or violence. The unintended consequence of this law is that students now effectively 'get away' with destruction while causing harm and violence to their fellow students. This creates an unsafe environment for everyone in our schools which then leads to creating destructive adults.

• Finally, when Parents actively refuse to get their kids to school, or directly hinder their child's academic success, they need to be held accountable using 'academic neglect' laws.

If you are reading this and don't believe that our Educational Systems are broken, watch the excellent documentary Waiting for 'Superman' (2010). Since then, things have only gotten worse because good teachers have given up or retired early, and even fewer new people want to go into this thankless profession.

If you don't believe our students are broken, watch the crime drama on Netflix called 'Adolescence' (2025) based on actual events in the UK. The student behavior and disrespect you will see in the school was an everyday occurrence for me when I taught in Chicago over 25 years ago and is becoming more and more prevalent in Van Buren County every year.

As I continue to invest in our community, when new families move into our area and seek a recommendation on which school district is best for their kids, I now suggest they schedule an appointment to tour of all the neighboring school districts. I suggest they walk through the halls and walk past the classrooms. If they observe students learning, then that school may be a good fit for their family. But if they see and hear students abusing their teachers and staff, they may want to consider other options.

G. Ben Bowater IV

COMMON SENSE II

Dear Editor:

Over two centuries ago a man by the name of Thomas Paine wrote a pamphlet/treatise on Common Sense. It was a wake-up call to the colonists at the time of our revolution from Great Britain to seek independence from the mother country. He offered the recent examples of tariffs on exported goods from the colonies and the bloody "Bunker Hill" episode. He was basically saying to the colonies that it was way past time to declare their independence from England. He said that the colonies should unite against a tyrannical King George and laws that bound them to a tiny island, the old world, and were governed by a Parliament and King that only desired to control the colonists in the interest of their King.

He argued that wars that were more than common in Europe due to the factions of kingdoms than covered the face of his countryside for millennia and that the rule of sovereignty was outdated and wrong for the then thirteen colonies. He vehemently argued that the colonies should be a new nation and that they would control their own destiny by becoming what he called "America"; this was a very persuasive argument for the colonies at that time of internal and external rebellion that coalesced in the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

I argue today in 2025 that it makes more than "Common Sense" to proclaim our independence from a tyrannical ruler who presently resides in our White House! As the famous singer/songwriter sang, Mr. Bob Dylan, that "The Times They Are a Changing"and I hope most Americans today in 2025 will agree with me that one person who claims total immunity from prosecution and the rule of law is not normal for our "We The People" government. Now is the time for all good Men and Women to come to the aid of their Country"! This was typed by my father, Peter James Wehle, who served in World War II and I am sure would be aghast of the daily trials and tribulations that we Americans are suffering. It is way past time to say "Enough is Enough" and that "America is already Great." This makes "Common Sense" to me! How about you?

Peter Wehle

THE COURIER LEADER
PAW PAW FLASHES
SOUTH HAVEN BEACON

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OBITUARIES

JoAnn (Gentner) Learman

JoAnn (Gentner) Learman, 71, of Decatur, lovingly known to many as "Grandma Jo," passed away peacefully, March 21, 2025. She was born May 7, 1953, to George and Loretta “Hattie” Gentner, the youngest of eight children. She spent her early years learning and laughing in a one-room schoolhouse where she developed the strong values and warm heart that would guide her throughout life.

In May 1972, JoAnn married Frederick Learman, and together they raised four daughters. Though their marriage ended in October 1995, they remained connected through their daughters.

In 2001, JoAnn began a relationship with Dan Wydick, with whom she spent her happiest years and played an integral role in his business. With Dan came four bonus chil-dren that she embraced as her own.

Her hands were rarely still, as she found joy in baking cookies and creating delicious treats for those she loved. She had a green thumb and could often be found nurturing plants that seemed to flourish under her care. Crocheting was another of her cherished hobbies, and her creations were filled with the same love and warmth. Her collections of butterflies and roosters showcased her appreciation for the whimsy and beauty of the world around her.

Besides attending many sporting events and band concerts for her children and grandchildren, she also volunteered her time. She helped with Girl Scout troops and the Saint Mary’s Catholic School monthly lunch program sponsored by the Knights of Columbus (Paw Paw). Known for her welcoming nature, JoAnn never met a stranger - she intro-duced herself as “Grandma Jo” to everyone she encountered, spreading love and connec-tion wherever she went.

Surviving are her partner, Dan; four children, Sheli (Derik) Groner, Kristi (Robert) Everhart, Heather (Bob) Kusmack and Lisa (Andrew) Crawley; bonus children, Dustin Wydick, Renee (Tony) Wydick, Laura (Eric) Wydick, and Daniel (Stephanie) Wydick; grand-children, Seth (Whitney), Grant, Breeana, Brooklynn, Nolan, Kalin, Carlee, Grace, Karter, Alex, Denver, Leighton, Ethan, Bristol, Rhyder, and Lily; siblings, Richard (Virginia) Gentner, Donna Apisa, Willis Gentner, and Barb Mausolf; numerous nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death were her parents and siblings, Dale Gentner, Jack Gentner, and Ann Phillips, and a granddaughter, Faith.

A celebration of JoAnn’s life will be held April 26, at the Knights of Columbus Hall, Red Arrow Highway, Paw Paw. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations to American Cancer Society or Saint Mary’s Catholic Church in her honor.

Share a memory or sign the online guest book at: adamspawpaw.com

Mr. David Arthur Anderson

Mr. David Arthur Anderson, "Bubba", age 80, of Mattawan, passed away peacefully on Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025 at the Life Care Center of Plainwell surrounded by his loving family. Mr. Anderson was born on Dec. 4, 1944 in Albion, the son of the late Carl Wal-lace and Helen Louise (Day) Anderson.

David was born and raised in Albion, graduating with the class of 1963. He went on to study Physical Education at Adrian College, graduating with a B.A. degree in 1967. While at Adrian, David became a member of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity. On Dec. 19, 1970, David married the love of his life, Cheryl Lynn Hughey. David later re-ceived his Master's in Physical Education from Western Michigan University in 1973.

David began his teaching career in White Pigeon where he taught for five years. He continued his teaching career in 1972 at Lawton High School teaching history and physical education. David coached varsity football and baseball at Lawton as well as at Mattawan High School where he was the defensive coordinator for varsity football and head coach of the junior varsity baseball team. David retired from Lawton public schools in 2007 as a very active P.E. and history teacher and mentor. In his forty-year career, David touched countless lives of the students he taught and coached and spent many summers as a driver's education teacher helping many kids earn their driver's licenses.

Mr. Anderson was a very accomplished athlete in his younger days. David played bas-ketball, football, and baseball at Albion High School, and then continued his athletic career at Adrian College. After he finished his degree at Adrian, he went on to play mi-nor league baseball in the region.

David was an avid sports fan, especially of the Detroit Tigers and Lions, the Kalamazoo Wings, Adrian College baseball, the Lawton Blue Devils, and the University of Michi-gan. Outside of sports, David loved attending concerts, especially of his favorite band, Styx, who he saw probably at least 50 times. He also loved watching old westerns in his retirement.

Mr. Anderson was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, Leonard and Doug-las Anderson; one sister, Kristine Collum; and a special nephew, Michael Egnatuk.

Remaining to cherish his memory are his wife, Cheryl L. Anderson, of Mattawan; one daughter, Nicole (Matt) McLean, of Monkton, MD; one son, Matthew (Bay) Anderson, of Redmond, WA; grandchildren, Zelly and Zuriel; sister, Carol Lee Egnatuk; sister-in-law, Ruthann (Douglas) Anderson; and sister-in-law, Patricia (Leonard) Anderson; and many beloved cousins, nieces, and nephews.

A private burial will take place on Saturday, April 19th. A celebration of David Ander-son's life will take place on July 19th at the Antwerp Activity Center in Mattawan from 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Donations in Mr. Anderson's memory may be given to the Parkinson's Foundation and the Adrian College Baseball team.

Online condolences may be left at http://www.hohner-fh.com.

Bloomingdale’s Hayes recognized as certified athletic administrator

Bloomingdale Public Schools is proud to announce that Jason Hayes, the district’s Athletic Director since the 2021-22 school year, has been recognized by the National

Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) as a Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) a prestigious national certification earned by a select group of interscholastic athletic leaders.

This certification recognizes athletic administrators who demonstrate a high level of knowledge, experience, and dedication to professional growth in the field of interscholastic athletics. The voluntary certification process includes a rigorous evaluation of a candidate’s background, leadership, and contributions to the profession, as well as successful completion of a comprehensive written examination.

“Jason is a hard-working and committed leader who is always looking for ways to improve the experience for our student-athletes,” said Superintendent Rick Reo. “He’s deeply invested in the Bloomingdale community and consistently ensures students have meaningful opportunities to participate in athletics and grow from them.”

Brandon Lukes, principal of Bloomingdale Middle and High School, echoed that praise:

“As principal, I greatly appreciate Mr. Hayes’ unwavering dedication and tireless efforts as our Athletic Director. His leadership, vision, and commitment to our student-athletes go far beyond the scoreboard. Through his hard work, he is fostering a culture of sportsmanship, perseverance, and excellence that positively impacts not only our athletic programs but also the character and growth of our students.”

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IT’S EASY!
Just visit our website @epaper.wilcoxnewspapers.com to start your $20.00 email Subscription.

Area Church Services

PAW PAW

ALMENA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
27503 CR 375
Pastor Len Schoenherr
668-2811 • www.almenaumc.com
SUNDAY
Worship - 11 a.m.
(Childcare Provided)
FRIDAY: AA- 8 p.m.

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COVEY HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
33566 28th Avenue
(corner of 28th & M-40)
269-628-2139 • www.coveyhill.org
Pastor Daniel Wilson
SUNDAY
Worship @10:45am
Nursery & Children’s Church provided
Messages available on YouTube

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FAITH OF THE APOSTLES CURCH
34580 M-40 Highway
Elder David Harn
1 (269) 512-4586
SUNDAY
Christian Education - 10 a.m.
Wroship Service - 11:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY • Bible Study - 7 p.m.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
32464 Red Arrow
Pastor Horace M. “Buddy” Turner... 657-2090
SUNDAY
Worship - 11 a.m.
on Facebook:
www.Facebook.com/buddyturner2 or search:
“Buddy Turner”

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
120 Pine St, Paw Paw
Worship: 11am Sundays
in person or online at -
www.pawpawpres.com or
www.youtube.com/@1stprespawpaw

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NEW HOPE FAMILY
201 W. Michigan Avenue
Pastor Mark Roberts
www.newhopefellowship.org
SUNDAY
Morning Worship - 10 a.m.

••••

PAW PAW SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CURCH
60409 South M-40
Pastor Sean Reed
Lawn Services - 10 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.pawpaw.church
Oline worship services on Facebook & YourTube

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PAW PAW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
657-7727 • 420 W. Michigan Ave.
Pastor Dan Phillips
SUNDAY Service: 10:00 am

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RED ARROW MINISTRIES
31133 Red Arrow Highway
Rev. G. Ben Bowater, IV Founding Pastor
SUNDAY Worship - 9:30 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.redarrowministries.org for live stream worship

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ST. MARK’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
412 Cedar Street
Handicap Accessible
657-3762 • www.stmarkpawpaw.com
e-mail: stmarkspawpaw@gmail.com
Mailing Address:
P.O.Box 307, Paw Paw, MI 49079
SUNDAY Worship 9:30 a.m.

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ST. MARY’S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
500 Paw Paw Street
Rev. Fr. Alan P. Jorgensen
657-4459
SATURDAY Vigil - 4:00 p.m.
SUNDAY MASSES - 9AM & 11AM
Holy days & Daily Masses
Consult Bulletin

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TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL
721 Pine Street
Pastor Phillip Phifer
Church: 657-4840
School: 657-5921
Sunday Services 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.

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TRUTH CHURCH
32560 56th Ave. • 657-5042
www.truthchurchpawpaw.com
Pastor Steven Green
SUNDAY
School - 10 a.m.
Evening Service - 6 p.m.
THURSDAY Bible Study - 7 p.m.

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IGLESIA DEL ESPÍRITU SANTO/ CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
30037 E Red Arrow Hwy., Bilingual
Pastors Maggie and Jay Salas
Domingo/Sunday:
Adoración | Worship- 10 a.m.
Jueves/Thursday: Oracion/ Estudió Bíblico | Prayer/Bible Study- 7 p.m.
(269) 377-6514/ (269) 993-6727

LAWTON

DAILY HARVEST MINISTRIES
117 S.Franklin Street
Pastor Jack Shanley
SUNDAY Worship - 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Bible Study - 6 p.m.

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IGLESIA PENTECOSTES
Eel Movimiento misionero Mundial, Inc.
Bilingual
117 S. Franklin Street
Pastors Arturo & Lourdez Hernandez
(616) 656-0137
SERVICES
Domingo - 9:30 a.m.
Martes y Jueves - 7:30 p.m.
Local: (269) 655-8071

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LAWTON EVANGELICAL CHURCH
425 S. Nursery Street, Lawton • 624-1524
Call if you need help in some way
www.lawtonevan.com
SUNDAY Worship Services - 10 a.m.
We offer Nursery and Children’s Church

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NEW COMMUNITY CHURCH
502 N. Main Street, Lawton, MI 49065
Pastor Adam Potgiesser
Sunday Worship 10am
www.nc2online.com • facebook.com/nc2online
(269) 299-2003

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ST. PAUL’S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
624-1050
Pastor Ashlei Horn
SUNDAY Worship - 10:00 a.m.
www.stpoulsumclawton.com or on Facebook
www.Facebook.com/Lawton-St-Pauls-UMC

MARCELLUS

ST. MARGARET MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH
296 E. Dibble St.
Rev. Fr. Alan P. Jorgensen
668-3312
SUNDAY - 9:45AM

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HARMONY CHAPEL
88067 C.R. 652 (In the SW corner of Porter Twp.)
Rev. Ron Packer
269-548-7348
Please join us as we continue to Worship in the Country Since 1894
SUNDAY Service - 12:30 p.m.
For mor information or directions call:
Neal Ferguson: 269-624-6837 or
Ann Nesbitt: 269-624-6781

DECATUR

DECATUR BIBLE CHURCH
80797 M-51, Decatur • (269) 423-5111
Pastor Steven Pace
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Worship 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study &
Prayer 5:00 p.m.
facebook.com/DecaturBibleChurch • http://www.decaturbible.org

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Decatur New Hope Community Church
319 ½ West Delaware Street
Pastor Ross Tarantino
SUNDAY • Worship Service-10:00 a.m.
TUESDAY • Bible Study-1:00 p.m.
269-423-8136
info@decaturnewhopecommunity.net

MATTAWAN

Calvary Community Church
7829 S. 5th St
Pastor Gregory VanHeukelom
375-6240 • www.calvaryreformed.org
Website: https://www.calvary-community.church/
Worship still 10 am Sunday with live Facebook
Jody’s Closet, a free clothing ministry is open
Mon/Tue 10am-12 and Thur 6-7:30pm
And the 1st Saturday of the month 8:30-10am.•

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FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH
56070 Murray Street
Pastor Chuck Rawsthorne
SUNDAY
School - 9:30 a.m.
Morning Service - 10:30 a.m.
(In person and on Facebook)

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MATTAWAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
23680 Front Ave.
668-3263 • www.mattawancc.com
mattawancommunitychurch@gmail.com
Pastor Eric Baird
SUNDAYS AT 10:25 A.M

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ST. JOHN BOSCO CATHOLIC CHURCH
23830 Front Ave.
Rev. Fr. Alan P. Jorgensen
668-3312 • www.stjohnbosco.com
SUNDAY Mass - 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.
SATURDAY 4 p.m.

LAWRENCE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Corner of Exchange & James Street • 674-8381
Pastor Doug Tipken
SUNDAY Worship - 11 a.m.
lawrencemethodist-church.org
for information of online videos

GOBLES

NORTHPOINT MINISTRIES OF GOBLES
04077 M40 • 269-628-9199
northpointgobles@gmail.com
Pastors: Gary Lounsberry & John Losen Jr.
Sunday: 11am - Morning Worship
Monday: 7 pm - REFRESH Bible Study
Wednesday: 7pm - Prayer Meeting

DIRECTORY OF CHURCH SERVICES IS PROVIDED BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS

THE CLOTHES BASKET
314 Paw Paw Street
Paw Paw • 657-6441

DE TSMIA
Insurance Agency, INC.
130 N. Main Street
Lawton • 624-4411

CAMPBELL MURCH
CEMETERY MEMORIALS, INC.
56556 Main Street
Mattawan • 668-3350

Adams FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATION SERVICES
ADAMS FUNERAL HOME
Serving the Community Since 1948
504 W. Michigan Avenue
Paw Paw • 657-6347

ho
HIEMSTRA OPTICAL CO.
Michael Houser & staff
133 E. Michigan Avenue
Paw Paw • 657-4511

St JULIAN winery • distillery
Michigan’s Oldest & Largest Winery
716 S. Kalamazoo Street
Paw Paw • 657-5568

BRONSON LakeView Hospital
408 Hazen Street
Paw Paw • 657-3141

PUBLIC NOTICE

ALMENA TOWNSHIP
SYNOPSIS
FEBRUARY 19, 2025

Almena Township Board meeting was held February 19, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. called to order by Clerk Rickli.
Roll call: Kelly Redmond, Tim Kloosterman, Pat Denny-Diget, John Wagner, Mark Roman, Sandra Rickli. Late: Joe Leduc (excused)

a. Motion to appoint Kelly Redmond to chair the meeting
b. Motion to approve agenda as presented
c. Motion to approve meeting minutes of January 15, 2025 as written
d. Disbursements approved in the amount of $39,998.99 for January 20, 2025 through February 19, 2025
e. Sheriff's Dept. report
f. Paw Paw and Mattawan Fire Dept. reports
g. Public comment offered
h. Reports by officers were presented
i. Motion approved to re-appoint Steve Manning to the Planning Commission
j. Motion approved to re-appoint Matt Moulds to the Planning Commission
k. Motion approved to re-appoint Chris Rickli to the Cemetery Board
l. Motion approved to contribute $500 toward 2025 Van Buren County Resource Recovery and Recycling Program.
m. Supervisor Leduc arrived @ 7:30 pm, Motion approved to appoint Supervisor Leduc to chair the meeting
n. Motion to change the date of Ordinance 2025-01 from December 18, 2024 to February 19, 2025
o. Motion to approve Ordinance 2025-01 Inoperable Vehicles, Vehicle Repair and Storage Ordinance
p. Motion approved to accept Cornerstone Construction bid for the township hall addition for $421,900
q. Motion approved to submit an application to the DNR showing interest in purchasing the Hayden Creek property and schedule an appraisal not to exceed $5,000.00
r. Motion approved to pursue the sale of property located at 38064 CR 653
s. Public comment offered.
t. Meeting adjourned 7:53pm

Sandra Rickli, Clerk, Almena Township

State of Michigan Judicial Circuit - Family Division
Van Buren County
PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF HEARING REGARDING PETITION FOR NAME CHANGE
Case: 2025-7011-NC • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
In the Matter of ELIJAH JOHN ESSELTINE

TO ALL PERSONS, including: (specify non-custodial parent's name here, if applicable) whose address is unknown and whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following:
TAKE NOTICE Elijah John Esseltine has filed a petition for name change.
A name change hearing will be held on **April 16,2025 (04/16/2025) at 11:00 am at Probate Court, Courtroom #3 before Judge Susan Metzger** to change the name of:
Elijah John Esseltine to Elijah John Rose

State of Michigan Judicial District 36th
Judicial Circuit County Probate
ORDER FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION/POSTING AND NOTICE OF ACTION
CASE: 25-074548-CZ
Court: 212 E. Paw Paw St., Paw Paw, MI 49079 • Phone: 269-657-8200

Plaintiff:
Third Party Plaintiffs
Brian W. Kelly & Kimberly Ann Kelly
280 39th St., Allegan, MI 49010
Plaintiff Attorney:
MINKA PLC by Imants M. Minka (P29211)
5987 West Main St., Ste 812, Kalamazoo, MI 49009
269-353-0100
iminka@minkalaw.com
V.
Defendant:
Third Party Defendants
Kimberly M. Christenson
25247 Elm Street
Calumet, MI 49913
and,
Walter Henry Clare, II
Address & Whereabouts unknown

TO: WALTER HENRY CLARE, II
IT IS ORDERED:
1. You are being sued in this court by the plaintiff to **Defend in a lawsuit to quiet title to land located at 00360 51 1/2 Street, Grand Junction, MI 49056.** You must file your answer or take other action permitted by law in this court at the court address above on or before **April 14,2025 (04/14/2025)**. If you fail to do so, a default judgment may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint filed in this case.
2. A copy of this order shall be published once each week in three consecutive weeks, **Courier Leader** for, and proof of publication shall be filed in this court.

March 12,2025
Judge Susan Metzger

State of Michigan
Probate Court Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2025-1027-DE • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
ESTATE OF LISA DAWN STROHAUER, DECEASED
Date of Birth: September 24,1966 (09/24/1966)
TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **Lisa Dawn Strohauer, died January 23,2025 (01/23/2025).**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Michael Strohauer,** personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street #220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

March 14,2025

Attorney:
Laura E. Volkmann #P71882
5830 Venture Park Dr., Kalamazoo, MI 49009
269-459-1432
Personal Representative:
Michael Strohauer
39831 County Road 390, Bloomingdale, MI 49026
269-491-2004

State of Michigan
Probate Court Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
ESTATE OF NATHAN ALLEN MENCK, DECEASED
Date of Birth: December 15,1982 (12/15/1982)
TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **Nathan Allen Menck, died January 5,2025 (01/05/2025)**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Jerry Menck,** personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street #220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

March 21,2025

Attorney:
Elizabeth Robinson #P84345
4341 S. Westnedge Avenue, Ste 1200, Kalamazoo, MI 49008
269-344-0700
Personal Representative
Jerry Menck
4912 West Unora Park Drive/ PO Box 730, Baldwin, MI 49304
269-370-0946

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: PAUL JOHN MCFARLAND; ATTY: SCHNEIDERMAN & SHERMAN, P.C. - SCHNEIDERMAN & SHERMAN, PC; 1ST PUB: 3/27/2025; ATTY FILE #: 24-001906-2; INSURER: FHLMC
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on April 24, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Paul John McFarland, a married man Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), solely as nominee for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: April 15, 2016 Recorded on May 24, 2016, Liber 1636, on Page 556, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Seventy-Three Thousand Three Hundred Fifty-Five and 40/100 Dollars ($73,355.40) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: Lot 24, Harrison Acres, Paw Paw Township, Van Buren County, Michigan, according to the plat thereof as recorded in Liber 4 of Plats, Page 39. Commonly known as 56111 39th St, Paw Paw, MI 49079 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale will be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, or the Mortgagee's attorney. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400
1557056

(03-27)(04-17)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: BROOKS COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE LLC; ATTY: FOSTER, SWIFT, COLLINS & SMITH, P.C. - BENJAMIN J. PRICE ; 1ST PUB: 3/27/2025; ATTY FILE #: (N/A); INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF MORTGAGE SALE ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: IF YOU ARE A MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER ON ACTIVE DUTY, IF YOUR PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY HAS CONCLUDED LESS THAN 90 DAYS AGO, OR IF YOU HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ACTIVE DUTY, PLEASE CONTACT THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PARTY FORECLOSING THE MORTGAGE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER STATED IN THIS NOTICE. NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 p.m. on May 1, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. DEFAULT having been made in the conditions of a certain Mortgage made on April 17, 2023, by Brooks Commercial Real Estate LLC, a Michigan limited liability company, as Mortgagor, given by it to Commercial Bank, a Michigan banking corporation, as Mortgagee, recorded on May 1, 2023, in Liber 1752, Page 219, Van Buren County Records; on which Mortgage there is claimed to be due and unpaid, as of the date of this Notice, the sum of Three Hundred Twenty Thousand Four Hundred Eighty-One and 57/100 Dollars ($320,481.57); and no suit or proceeding at law or in equity having been instituted to recover the debt or any part thereof secured by said Mortgage, and the power of sale in said Mortgage having become operative by reason of such default; NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on Thursday, May 1, 2025 at 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon, at the front steps of the Courthouse in Paw Paw, Michigan, that being one of the places for holding the Circuit Court for Van Buren County, there will be offered for sale and sold to the highest bidder or bidders at public auction or venue for purposes of satisfying the amounts due and unpaid on said Mortgage, together with all allowable costs of sale and includable attorney fees, the lands and premises in said Mortgage mentioned and described as follows: SITUATED IN THE CITY OF SOUTH HAVEN, COUNTY OF VAN BUREN, STATE OF MICHIGAN: Parcel 1: The East 22 feet of the West 44.0 feet of Lot 1 and also the East 22.0 feet of the West 44.0 feet of Lot 2, Block 9, Hale, Conger and Company's Addition to the Village (now City) of South Haven, EXCEPTING therefrom the North 16.50 feet of the above described lands, City of South Haven, Van Buren County, Michigan. Parcel 2: Beginning at a point on the South line of Lot 12, Block 9, Hale, Conger and Company's Addition to the Village (now City) of South Haven, 222.50 feet East of the Southwest corner of said lot; thence Northerly and parallel with the East line of said lot, 132.0 feet; thence Easterly to the Northwest corner of Lot 2; thence Southerly to the Southwest corner of Lot 1; thence Westerly along South line of Lot 12 to the place of beginning, EXCEPTING therefrom the North 16.5 feet. ALSO the West 22 feet of Lots 1 and 2, EXCEPTING therefrom the North 16.5 feet of the West 22.0 feet of Lot 2, Block 9, Hale, Conger and Company's Addition to the City of South Haven, City of South Haven, Van Buren County, Michigan. Parcel 3: The East 22 feet of the West 1/2 of Lots 1 and 2, EXCEPT the North 16.5 feet thereof, Block 9, Hale, Conger and Company's Addition to the Village (now City) of South Haven, according to the recorded plat in Liber 25 of Plats, Page 470, Van Buren County Records, being a part of the Southeast fractional 1/4 of Section 3, Town 1 South, Range 17 West, according to the government survey thereof, City of South Haven, Van Buren County, Michigan. Parcel 4: The North 16.5 feet of Lot 2, Block 9, Hale, Conger and Company's Addition to the Village (now City) of South Haven. ALSO commencing at the Southwest corner of Lot 12; thence Easterly along the South line of said lot 222.5 feet; thence Northerly parallel of the East line of said lot 115.5 feet to the beginning of this description; thence continuing Northerly parallel to the Easterly line of said lot 16.5 feet; thence Easterly to the Northwest corner of Lot 2; thence Southerly along the West line of said Lot 2, 16.5 feet; thence Westerly to the place of beginning, being in Block 9, Hale Conger and Company's Addition to the Village (now City) of South Haven, City of South Haven, Van Buren County, Michigan. Commonly known as: 559 Phoenix Street, South Haven, Michigan 49090 Parcel Number: 80-53-769-001-50 The period within which the above premises may be redeemed shall expire six (6) months from the date of sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the mortgagor(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. This notice is from a debt collector. Dated: March 20, 2025 COMMERCIAL BANK of Alma, Michigan, Mortgagee FOSTER, SWIFT, COLLINS & SMITH, P.C. Benjamin J. Price Attorneys for Mortgagee 313 S. Washington Square Lansing, MI 48933 (517) 371-8253

(03-27)(04-17)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: AARON JOHNSON; ATTY: POTESTIVO & ASSOCIATES - POTESTIVO & ASSOCIATES; 1ST PUB: 3/20/2025; ATTY FILE #: 320395; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT
NOTICE is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the Circuit Court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, on April 17, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Aaron Johnson, Married Man Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Success Mortgage Partners, Inc., its successors and assigns Foreclosing Assignee: PennyMac Loan Services, LLC Date of Mortgage: March 26, 2019 Date of Mortgage Recording: April 9, 2019 Amount claimed due on mortgage on the date of notice: $127,073.41 Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in the Village of Mattawan, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: Lot 67 in Westland Park No. 2, according to the plat thereof recorded in Liber 7 of plats, Page 61, Van Buren County Records. Commonly Known as: 57403 Rumshire Dr., Mattawan, MI 49071 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or upon the expiration of the notice required by MCL 600.3241a(c), whichever is later; or unless MCL 600.3240(16) applies. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Purchaser: This sale may be rescinded by the foreclosing mortgagee for any reason. In that event, your damages, if any, shall be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest, and the purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, or the Mortgagee's attorney. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector. Date of notice: 03/20/2025 Potestivo & Associates, P.C. 251 Diversion Street, Rochester, MI 48307 248-853-4400 320395

(03-20)(04-10)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: BARBARA LYNN ROKOS; ATTY: TEAM H; 1ST PUB: 3/20/2025; ATTY FILE #: 521906F01; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on April 17, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Barbara Lynn Rokos, a single woman
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Village Capital & Investment, LLC
Date of Mortgage: October 26, 2020
Date of Mortgage Recording: October 30, 2020
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $52,040.17
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Hartford, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Part of the Southeast 1/4 of Section 34, Town 3 South, Range 16 West, Hartford Township, Van
Buren County, Michigan, described as beginning at the East 1/4 post of said Section 34, thence S 00 degrees 05 minutes 25 seconds W, along the East line of said Section, 1014.42 feet to the point of beginning of the land herein described, thence continuing S 00 degrees 05 minutes 25 seconds W, along the said East line, 300 feet to the South line of the Northeast 1/4 of said Southeast 1/4, thence N 89 degrees 45 minutes 00 seconds W, along said South line, 300 feet, thence North 00 degrees 05 minutes 25 seconds E, parallel with the East line of said Section, 300 feet, thence S 89 degrees 45 minutes 00 seconds E, parallel with the South line of the northeast 1/4 of said Southeast 1/4 300 feet to the place of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 70858 62nd St, Hartford, MI 49057-8659
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: March 20, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1555936

(03-20)(04-10)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: MATE VUJIC; ATTY: TEAM J; 1ST PUB: 3/20/2025; ATTY FILE #: 490924F05; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on April 17, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Petar Vujic by Ante Vujic, his attorney-in-fact and Mate Vujic by Ante Vujic, his attorney-in-fact
Original Mortgagee: Bank of America, N.A.
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Select Portfolio Servicing, Inc.
Date of Mortgage: August 21, 2008
Date of Mortgage Recording: August 27, 2008
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $88,989.29
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Lawrence, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Lot 26, Block 1 Boudreau Shores, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds for Van Buren County in Liber 5 of Plats, Page 2.
Common street address (if any): 60558 N Lakeshore Dr, Lawrence, MI 49064-9723
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: March 20, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1555956

(03-20)(04-10)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: BARBARA PRUITT; ATTY: TEAM X; 1ST PUB: 3/6/2025; ATTY FILE #: 522413F01; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)- NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on April 10, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Barbara Pruitt and Tom L. Pruitt, wife and husband
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing
Date of Mortgage: July 18, 2002
Date of Mortgage Recording: July 25, 2002
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $40,086.24
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Columbia, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: BEGINNING ON THE NORTH LINE OF SECTION 11, TOWN 1 SOUTH, RANGE 15 WEST, AT A POINT 547.63 FEET SOUTH 89 DEGREES 03 MINUTES 00 SECONDS WEST OF THE NORTH QUARTER POST OF THE SECTION; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 03 MINUTES 00 SECONDS WEST ON THE SECTION LINE, 110.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 41 MINUTES 40 SECONDS EAST, 1314.83 FEET TO THE EAST AND WEST EIGHT LINE; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 01 MINUTES 33 SECONDS EAST ON SAME, 110.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 41 MINUTES 40 SECONDS WEST, 1314.78 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING.
Common street address (if any): 49290 County Road 388, Grand Junction, MI 49056-9242
The redemption period shall be 1 year from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: March 6, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1554681

(03-06)(03-27)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: BEVERLY RACHEL HILTON; ATTY: RANDALL S. MILLER & ASSOCIATES, P.C. - RANDALL S. MILLER & ASSOCIATES, P.C.; 1ST PUB: 3/13/2025; ATTY FILE #: 22MI00347-6; INSURER:

Continues on page 9

PUBLIC NOTICE

Continues from page 8

(UNKNOWN) FORECLOSURE NOTICE ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, April 10, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by Beverly Rachel Hilton, A Single Woman to Republic Bank, Mortgagee, dated June 8, 2005, and recorded on June 13, 2005, in Liber 1439, Page 890, Van Buren County Records, said mortgage was assigned to Carrington Mortgage Services LLC by an Assignment of Mortgage dated February 20, 2025 and recorded February 26, 2025 in Liber 1775, Page 249, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Forty-Seven Thousand One Hundred Forty and 94/100 ($47,140.94) including interest at the rate of 6.12500% per annum. Said premises are situated in the Village of Paw Paw, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: Lots 2 and 3 excepting the South 50 feet thereof in Block 42, the Village of Paw Paw original plat. Commonly known as: 500 E SAINT JOSEPH ST, PAW PAW, MI 49079 If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be 12.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages are, if any, limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: March 13, 2025 Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. Attorneys for Carrington Mortgage Services LLC 43252 Woodward Avenue, Suite 180, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302, (248) 335-9200 Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Case No. 22MI00347-6

(03-13)(04-03)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: KEVIN WAITE; ATTY: BETTER CHOICE NOTICE SOLUTIONS - BROCK & SCOTT PLLC MI; 1ST PUB: 3/13/2025; ATTY FILE #: 24-18752; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, on April 17, 2025. The amount due on the Mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by Kevin Waite to loanDepot.com, LLC dated March 7, 2022 and recorded March 14, 2022 in Liber 1734 at Page 324, Van Buren County, Michigan. Said Mortgage is now held by loanDepot.com, LLC by assignment and/or merger. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $169,026.72. Said premises are located in Van Buren County, Michigan and are described as: THE LAND SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF ALMENA, COUNTY OF VAN BUREN, STATE OF MICHIGAN, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING ON THE EAST LINE OF SECTION 18, TOWN 2 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, AT A POINT 1416.00 FEET NORTH OF THE EAST 1/4 POST OF THE SECTION; THENCE NORTH ON THE SECTION LINE 150.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89°35'54" WEST 340.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 150.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89°35'54" EAST, 340.00 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. Parcel/APN/ Tax ID: 80-01-018-002-60 Said property is commonly known as 32846 32nd St, Paw Paw, MI 49079. The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages, if any, are limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Please be advised that any third party purchaser is responsible for preparing and recording the Sheriff's Deed. If this is a residential Mortgage, the following shall apply: ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT, AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. IF YOU: ARE A DEBTOR IN AN ACTIVE BANKRUPTCY CASE; ARE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF A BANKRUPTCY STAY; OR, HAVE RECEIVED A DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY AND YOU HAVE NOT REAFFIRMED THE DEBT, THIS NOTICE IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT FROM YOU PERSONALLY. Dated: March 7, 2025 Attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage: Thomas E. McDonald (P39312) Brock & Scott, PLLC 5431 Oleander Drive Wilmington, NC 28403 PHONE: (844) 856-6646 File No. 24-18752

(03-13)(04-03)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: GARED M OWSIANY; ATTY: HOLZMAN, RITTER & LEDUC, PLLC - HOLZMAN CORKERY, PLLC; 1ST PUB: 3/13/2025; ATTY FILE #: (N/A); INSURER: (UNKNOWN)- MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE NOTICE Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under Section 3212 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 P.M., on April 17, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Gared M. Owsiany a/k/a Gared Owsiany, a married man, ("Mortgagor"), gave a mortgage to United Bay Community Credit Union, ("Mortgagee"), dated August 25, 2020, and recorded on September 03, 2020, in Liber 1705, on Page 554, Van Buren County Records, Michigan. On the date of this notice, there is claimed to be due the principal of One Hundred Thirty-Two Thousand Two Hundred Forty-Eight Dollars and 75/100 Dollars ($132,248.75) plus accrued interest at 3.25% per annum. Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at the place of holding in the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan @ 1:00 P.M. on Thursday, April 17, 2025. Said premises are situated in the Township of Paw Paw, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, and are described as: Beginning at a point found by commencing at the Southeast Corner of Section 22, Town 3 South, Range 14 West, according to the government survey thereof, and running thence with bearing referenced to a survey recorded in Liber 1 of Survey Maps, Page 314, North 88 degrees 16 minutes 41 seconds West along the South Line of the Southeast quarter of said Section 1045.58 feet to the point of beginning of this description; Thence North 01 degree 04 minutes 40 seconds east parallel with the East line of said Southeast Quarter 835.00 feet; Thence South 88 degrees 16 minutes 41 seconds East parallel with said South line 522.78 feet; thence South 01 degree 04 minutes 40 seconds West 835.00 feet to the South line of said Section; thence North 88 degrees 16 minutes 41 seconds West 522.78 feet to beginning, according to a survey made by Smith and Smith, Inc., recorded in Liber 2 of Survey Maps, Page 78 on June 20, 1972. Commonly: 38338 64th Avenue Paw Paw, MI 49079—Tax Id #80-14-022-044-00 The redemption period shall be six months from the date of such sale unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, under Section 600.3278 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, the Mortgagor will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Dated: March 13, 2025 United Bay Community Credit Union, Mortgagee Holzman Law, PLLC By: Charles J. Holzman Attorney for Mortgagee 28366 Franklin Road Southfield, Michigan 48034 (248)352-4340

(03-13)(04-10)

WAVERLY TOWNSHP
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
BUDGET FOR YEAR 4/1/2025 – 03/31/26

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the budget hearing for the fiscal year April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026 has been scheduled for **April 3, 2025 at 6:30 P.M.** at the Waverly Township Hall, 42114 M-43 Highway, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

Starr Houston
Waverly Township Clerk

PUBLIC NOTICE
BLOOMINGDALE TOWNSHIP

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

That the **Public Accuracy Test** for the May 6, 2025 Special Election has been Scheduled for

Tuesday April 1, 2025, at 9:30am
In the Township Hall Meeting Room,
109 E. Kalamazoo St.
Bloomingdale, Michigan

The Public Accuracy Test is conducted to demonstrate that the program that will be used to tabulate the results of the Election counts the votes in the manner prescribed by law.

Melanie Kelly
Bloomingdale Township Clerk

ARLINGTON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Parcel ID # 80-03-001-035-00
The Arlington Township Planning Commission shall conduct a public hearing on April 14th, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the Arlington Township Hall, 52022 34th Ave., Bangor, MI 49013 where a rezoning request from Residential (R2) to Agricultural for parcel number 80-03-001-035-00 located at 24th Ave., Bloomingdale, MI 49026, will be considered. Owned by Scott Lake Development Inc., 81265 46th Ave., Coloma, MI 49038. A Public Hearing shall also be conducted for an Application for a Special Use Permit under Arlington Township Zoning Ordinance, Section 3.09 A., Special Uses (3), for parcel number 80-03-001-035-00 located at 24th Ave., Bloomingdale, MI 48026.

Parcel ID # 80-03-010-030-02
The Arlington Township Planning Commission shall conduct a public hearing on April 14th, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the Arlington Township Hall, 52022 34thAve., Bangor, MI 49013 where an Application for a Special Use Permit under Arlington Township Zoning Ordinance Section 3.07 C. for a mini storage business requested for parcel number 80-03-010-030-02 located at 31915 52nd street Bangor Mi. 49013 by Edgar D. Mims, 51810 M-43 Bangor, MI 49013, will be considered.

The public is invited to attend the meeting and comment on the requests. Comments may also be provided to the Planning Commission by mail or by e-mail to **PCMember1@arlingtontownship.com and clerk@arlingtontownship.com.**

People in need of special accommodation to attend the meeting should contact the Township at 269-427-7300 prior to the meeting.

Susan Wilson, Clerk

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
PAW PAW TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

The Paw Paw Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing regarding amendments to the Zoning Ordinance related to the requirements for solar energy systems, including associated definitions in Section 2.02 and amendments to Section 8.27: Requirements for Roof-Mounted and Building-Integrated Solar Energy Systems (SES), Accessory Ground-Mounted Solar Energy System (SES), and Commercial Solar Energy System (SES).

Public comments on the matter are welcomed. The meeting information is below:

- Location: Paw Paw Township Hall, 114 N. Gremps St., Paw Paw, MI, 49079
- Date: Tuesday, April 15, 2025
- Time: 6:00 PM
- Hearing and project information: call 269-657-4340 or email clerk@pawpawtownship.org

Those unable to attend the public hearing are invited to submit written comments to the attention of the Planning Commission Chair at the Township Hall address listed above by 4:00 PM on the meeting date.

If any individual has a physical disability that may limit their participation in the hearing, please notify the Township at least five (5) days before the hearing so that reasonable accommodations may be made.

VILLAGE OF PAW PAW PUBLIC NOTICE
NOXIOUS WEEDS WITHIN THE VILLAGE OF PAW PAW

Please take notice: The Village of Paw Paw has determined that the uncontrolled growth of tall grass and noxious weeds are detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Village, and constitute a public nuisance when found on any land in any subdivision of the Village in which buildings have been erected on 60 percent of the lots included in the subdivision; and on any lot along all improved streets, whether paved or unpaved, in common usage for a depth of ten rods (165 feet) or the depth of the lot, whichever is less.

Noxious Weeds include Canada thistle (Circium Arvense), dodders (any species of Cuscuta), mustards (charlock, black mustard and Indian mustard, species of Brassica or Sinapis), wild carrot (Daucus carota), bindweed (Convolvulus arvensis), perennial sowthistle (Sonchus arvensis), hoary alyssum (Berteros incana), ragweed (ambrosia elatior l.) and poison ivy (rhus toxicondendron), Poison Sumac (toxicodendron vernix) and **other plants, grass, vines or other growth whenever in the opinion of the board of trustees it is regarded as a common nuisance.**

The owner of land on which noxious weeds are found growing shall destroy the weeds before they reach a seed-bearing stage and prevent their regrowth or shall prevent them from becoming a detriment to public health. **A person who violates any provision of this article is responsible for a municipal civil infraction,** subject to payment of a civil fine of not less than $50 or more than $500, plus costs and other sanctions for each infraction. Each day on which any violation of this article continues is a separate offense and shall be subject to penalties or sanctions as a separate offense.

Tall grass and weeds not cut by June 1 of this year (2025) will be cut by the Village and the owner of the peropty charged with the cost under the provisions of the Village Code.

CLASSIFIEDS

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Farnquist named athletic administrator of year

Alan Farnquist, Paw Paw High School athletic director, has been named Region 5 Athletic Administrator of the Year by the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Adminis-trators Association (MIAAA) for the 2024-25 school year. Farnquist received the award March 15, in Traverse City, at the annual MIAAA Mid-Winter Conference in which over 500 athletic directors participated.

Farnquist holds a bachelor's degree in physical education from Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, along with a master's degree in educational leadership from Grand Valley State University. He began his teaching career at Bloomingdale High School in 2003, teaching math and physical education for 17 years. In 2014, Farnquist was chosen to lead the Bloomingdale Public School athletic department. In 2020, Farnquist was hired by Paw Paw High School as athletic director.

Rick Reo, former Paw Paw Public Schools' superintendent, said of Farnquist, "Alan is a detail-oriented and visible administrator who has worked hard to update Paw Paw's athletic department since taking over his role. Alan developed the "Champions" mission for the athletic department that prides itself on the development of positive character attributes, academic excellence, sportsmanship and community involvement among its student-athletes and programs as a whole."

Fellow Wolverine Conference athletic director Andy Hatt, said, "Alan is the poster child of a servant leader. His focus and priorities are always about

what is best for kids. If I am looking for advice or a second opinion, I can always count on Alan to give me a well-thought-out, student-centered response. He has been a friend and tremendous resource for me, and a leader within the Wolverine Conference."

During his time as athletic director, Farnquist has been a devoted and committed member of the Michigan High School sports community. He organized, planned, and de-veloped a student-officiating summit for Wolverine Conference student athletes to teach and register high school athletes as officials. He hosts countless meetings for the Wolver-ine Conference athletic directors and coaches. Paw Paw High School has also become a staple location for CAP meetings for the MHSAA. He is currently a member of both the Michigan High School Baseball Coaches Association as well as the American Baseball Coaches Association. He also currently serves as the Wolverine Conference chairperson for girls' basketball, boys' tennis, and girls' tennis.

Farnquist has been married to his wife, Jessica, for 15 years and has two sons, Anderson and Cal.

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Applications will be available beginning on Monday, April 7,2025 at 8:00 AM on the Mattawan Consolidated School website at www.mattawanschools.org. Interested persons may also request an application be mailed by contacting Leslie Swintz at 269-668-3361 Ext. 1771 or via email at lswintz@mattawanschools.org. The deadline for applications to be received at Mattawan Consolidated School is Friday, August 29,2025 at 4:00 PM.

The Mattawan Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight, marital status, or any other legally protected characteristic in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. Please contact the Title IX Coordinator, 56720 Murray Street, Mattawan, MI 49071, 269-668-3361 with inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies.

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